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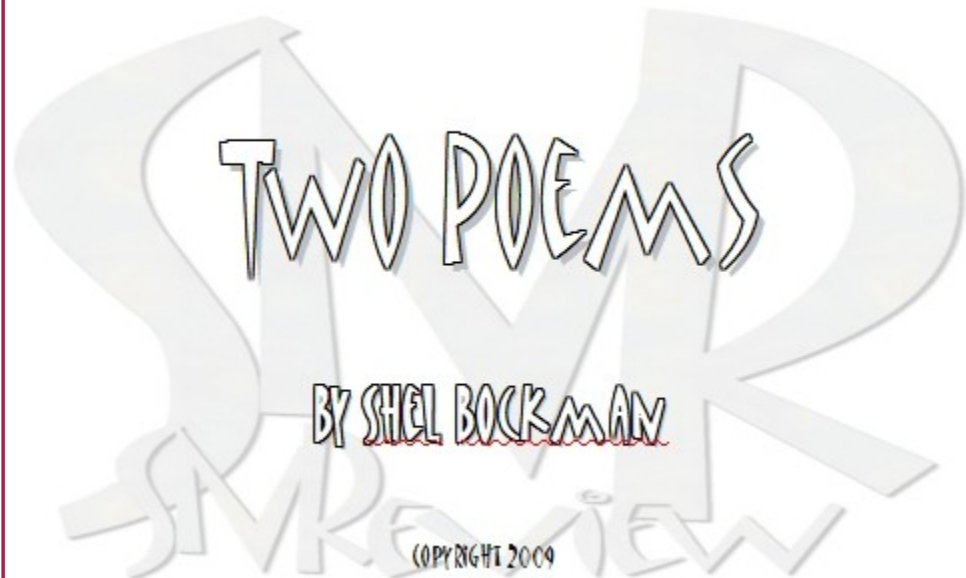
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The Vulnerable Man

They came to this strange new land with only
Hope and love in their pockets, but now as
He looked at the snow-bent trees facing
The early snow standing shoulder to shoulder
In their solitary camaraderie he was filled
With doubt that they would ever make it in this
Defiant place, but as he opened the door to their
Home of stone and wood he was greeted by the
Aroma and abundance of that year's first
Harvest and by the welcoming touch of the
Radiant fireplace which illuminated his
Wife, and as he turned towards her he saw on
The half-set table red roses in a chocolate vase
And then he smiled a knowing smile.

Renewal

As the evening settles into night
Underneath a canopy of stars
That cast their unblemished light
On the snow bleached landscape
I am embraced by the warmth
Of memories of what we were then
But of what we are not now, yet in
That remembrance I sense the
Sweet aroma of cherry blossoms
Which now slowly descend and mix
With the falling snow as I take
My first steps towards spring.

Shel Bockman, a professor at California State University, San Bernardino, attended the University of Iowa years ago and took some poetry writing courses, but stopped writing poetry after receiving advanced degrees in a different field of interest. Recently he returned to poetry and has published in *Boston Literary Magazine*, *Maverick*, *A Little Poetry*, *Flutter*, *Words-Myth*, and *Kupozine*.